



# Army *Safety* Gram



U.S. ARMY

ARMY SAFE  
IS ARMY STRONG

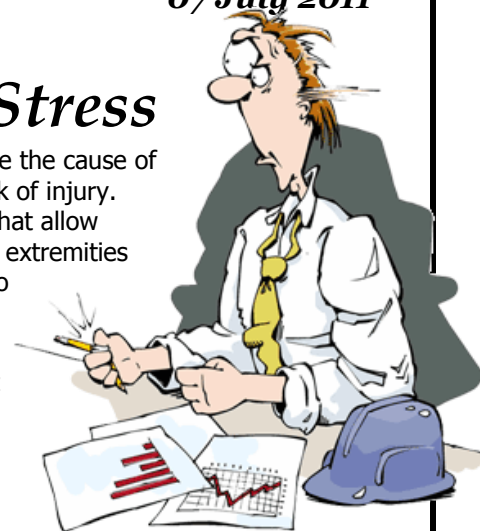
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## *Know the Dangers of Workplace Stress*

What's the number one stressor in your life? For many people, it's work. Stress can be the cause of personal unhappiness and much more. It is related to chronic health problems and risk of injury. Cardiovascular disease has been shown to be related to psychologically stressful jobs that allow workers little control over their work. Musculoskeletal disorders of the back and upper extremities are also believed to be linked to stress. Finally, distraction caused by stress can lead to injury incidents.

Stress is a natural event, and we require a certain amount of stress to function. Some controlled level of stress is normal and required for effective living. If we do not have enough stress we can become bored and our performance at work or home can suffer because we are unmotivated. However, if we are under too much uncontrolled stress for too long, we may suffer because stress-related problems can start to interfere with our performance.



*If you answer "yes" to these questions, you may be under excessive stress:*

- ◆ Do you feel you must work excessively hard to achieve your goals?
- ◆ Do you criticize yourself when you make a mistake?
- ◆ Do you feel you haven't done enough regardless of your efforts?
- ◆ Do you have little personal time to do the things you enjoy?

*Is there anything you can do to reduce job stress? Consider these suggestions for coping:*

- ◆ Recognize just because a situation is difficult doesn't mean you have to get stressed. You can develop considerable control over your reactions and learn to remain calm in chaos.
- ◆ This does not mean you should put up with unacceptable conditions. Look at what you can change and then do it. This may mean speaking up about a problem or tackling a project yourself.
- ◆ Look at the big picture. Stand back and consider how important a problem is in the big scheme of things. Will you still be annoyed tomorrow? Can you imagine being angry about the situation next week?
- ◆ Try to leave your off-work worries at the door when you come to work. Concentrate on safely performing the task at hand.
- ◆ Learn to manage your time so you don't feel rushed. Leave for work in plenty of time to drive the speed limit. Start projects well ahead of time and plan to finish before the deadline.
- ◆ Maintain good physical health. Eat regular nutritious meals. Get enough sleep - the entire eight hours most nights. Exercise most days, and do something recreational daily.

*Remind yourself why you are working. Are you supporting a family you care about? Or are you funding an education or launching a career you want?*

- ◆ Talk to people. When worries pile up, unload them on someone you trust.
- ◆ Smile and laugh a lot. A sense of humor is a great antidote for stress.
- ◆ Get expert help if you feel overwhelmed by stress. Talk to your health care provider or employee assistance office. Community and church programs also offer stress management instruction.



***Excessive stress makes you inattentive, upset and at risk for injury. The best state of mind for your safety is to be alert but calm.***